

COMMISSION CONFERENCE**DECEMBER 19, 2000**Agenda
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Present: Mayor Naugle
Commissioners Hutchinson, Katz, Moore, and Smith

Also Present: City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, and Police Sergeant

I-A – Board of Adjustment Interviews

The City Commission was scheduled to interview *Mr. Michael Ferber* and *Mr. Tim Hernandez* for one Board of Adjustment Alternate position, with a term beginning December 21, 2000 and expiring December 20, 2002. Mayor Naugle understood Mr. Hernandez was running late this morning.

Mr. Ferber said he had lived in Fort Lauderdale for close to 30 years and was a landlord of both commercial and residential buildings. He understood the nature and character of almost all of the City's neighborhoods, commercial districts, and waterways, and he believed he could interpret the rules and standards applicable to the Board of Adjustment. Mr. Ferber added that he had been a member of the CRA Board for the past 4 years and had a good attendance record, and he would consider it a privilege to serve the City on the Board of Adjustment.

Commissioner Hutchinson felt Mr. Ferber was well qualified for this position and would be an asset to the Board. Commissioner Katz requested additional information about Mr. Ferber's experience and expertise. Mr. Ferber stated that he had an understanding of the history of development within the City, and the nature and character of the neighborhoods. He believed that gave him the ability to understand the issues Citywide. Mr. Ferber said he did not hold any degrees, but he was a somewhat successful small businessman, and he felt he had the skill to evaluate testimony and apply the rules and standards contained in the Code.

Commissioner Katz asked Mr. Ferber what he would do in a situation that would benefit a homeowner but set a precedent in Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Ferber recognized that membership on the Board of Adjustment was a serious responsibility, and he would apply a philosophy that no individual rights should be expanded or diminished at the expense of anyone else's individual rights. He believed he could objectively evaluate the types of requests that were presented to the Board even if the surrounding neighbors had no objections.

Commissioner Moore said his only concern about appointing Mr. Ferber to the Board of Adjustment was the void it would leave on the CRA Advisory Board. Mr. Ferber said he would not desert his colleagues on that Board and had a serious interest in the Flagler Heights area. Although he would no longer be able to be a voting member of that Board, he intended to continue to participate in the process.

Commissioner Smith wondered how long Mr. Ferber could continue to serve on the CRA Board anyway in light of term limits. Mr. Ferber had been a member for 4 years, and Commissioner Moore concluded he could serve that Board for another 2 years.

Action: Item temporarily tabled pending the arrival of Mr. Hernandez.

**I-B – Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) – Broward Boulevard
Streetscape project 15395 – Federal Highway (U.S. 1) to West 7th Avenue**

A presentation was scheduled about a request from the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to expand the scope of the FDOT project on Broward Boulevard, between Federal Highway and West 7th Avenue. Mr. Pete Sheridan, Assistant City Engineer, stated that improvements were slated for all the intersections in the subject area except for Andrews Avenue and 3rd Avenue. The DDA thought it would be a good idea to do those improvements in those intersections as well and had offered to provide the funds. He stated that the FDOT was willing to incorporate those improvements into its project and was working with the contractor toward that end, with the understanding that there would have to be a joint participation agreement executed for reimbursement of costs.

Commissioner Moore had some concerns about meeting the needs of the community to the west with the monies available. He asked if the FDOT had discussed the funding gaps. Mr. Sheridan said there had been discussions with Broward County in this regard, since the County was “leading the charge” on that project. At this point, Broward County was willing to facilitate that project with \$80,000 per year over a 10-year period. The direction of the City Commission had been to examine the possibility of a special assessment to repay those monies, and there were concerns about assessing the abutting business owners on a roadway that served as a corridor street.

Commissioner Moore understood the FDOT would not be investing any additional money from 7th Avenue to Andrews Avenue in this project, but the DDA would pay the full cost. Mr. Sheridan agreed that was correct. Commissioner Moore asked which section of the roadway would be addressed first. Mr. Sheridan stated that the whole corridor would be done at the same time under one contract from 7th Avenue to Federal Highway, and the project from 7th Avenue west to State Road 7 was a separate contract.

Commissioner Moore stated that the community to the west had worked for 3-1/2 years to see these improvements, and he was pleased the DDA planned to use the same theme and beautification process. However, he did not want the DDA project to suddenly become the priority while the community to the west was still searching for funding. Commissioner Hutchinson understood there would be 2 separate contractors, and she did not think the DDA could address a project to the west.

Mr. Jerry Sternstein, of the DDA, stated that there was a prescribed period of time during which the DDA bond money had to be spent. He advised there were 24 months left to spend the funds, so the expenditure could not be delayed. Mayor Naugle understood the subject project would address 6 blocks east of 7th Avenue and 7 blocks west of 7th Avenue. Mr. Sheridan agreed that was correct. He noted that the project was all located within the DDA boundaries. Commissioner Smith asked how much the DDA project would cost. Mr. Sheridan believed the aesthetic enhancements would cost about \$600,000, and the overall project cost was \$1.5 million.

Mr. Greg Kisela, Assistant City Manager, advised that the project from 7th Avenue to State Road 7 was estimated to cost \$17 million to \$18 million, and the County would be administering that project. Commissioner Smith noted there was no comparison between the two projects, and this project was quite small. Commissioner Moore believed the only reason the DDA was interested in this project was in order to carry on the theme of the project from the west. Mr. Sternstein advised that was not the case. He advised that there had been an application filed for a special grant, which had not been forthcoming. Therefore, he had convinced the Board to carry out the project anyway in order to complete the two intersections that had not been included in the State project. Thus, this project was another component of the DDA's streetscape project.

Mayor Naugle felt the DDA was basically asking the Commission's permission to spend its own money. Commissioner Moore was not opposed to that, but he felt these projects should be handled together. He stated that when there was a constituency that had advocated redevelopment and beautification of a roadway for 3-1/2 years, it should be addressed. Commissioner Smith pointed out that Broward Boulevard was a long road that extended all the way into the Everglades, and the DDA was only speaking about the portion from Federal Highway to 7th Avenue. He acknowledged that there was a much larger project, all the way out to State Road 7, that needed to be done as well, but that was another subject that had nothing to do with the DDA.

Commissioner Moore felt the beautification of this roadway should be handled together with the City, the DDA, the FDOT and the County. Commissioner Smith pointed out that this phase of the project was already funded, and he saw no reason to delay this phase. Commissioner Moore thought it would provide impetus to identify funding for the rest. Commissioner Smith did not think it was fair to hold the DDA "hostage." Commissioner Katz understood the perception that caused Commissioner Moore's concern, but she was not interested in delaying this portion of the project.

Mayor Naugle asked Mr. Sternstein if he could ask his Board to help lobby the County Commission to come up with the \$800,000 to expedite the project. Mr. Sternstein said he would be happy to do so. Mayor Naugle asked Mr. Sternstein to notify the Commission when the matter was on the Board's agenda.

Mayor Naugle inquired about progress on the special assessment idea. The City Manager stated that staff was working on it, and there were various agencies involved in the project. Commissioner Smith asked if the County had met the shortfall for the project in the unincorporated area. The City Manager did not believe so. Mr. Kisela stated that County staff was working on a recommendation to present to the County Commission.

Action: Approved as discussed.

I-A – Board of Adjustment Interviews (Continued)

Mr. Tim Hernandez said he had lived in the Coral Ridge neighborhood since 1992, and he had degrees in urban planning and finance. He owned a small development company based in Delray Beach, which focused on infill development east of I-95. Mr. Hernandez had served as a member of the Community Appearance Board, and he had served in other locales in the areas of affordable housing and planning. He believed he had a good grasp of planning, development, and design issues.

Commissioner Smith thought Mr. Hernandez had intimate knowledge of community redevelopment agencies based upon his resume. When he had read it, he had felt Mr. Hernandez was “tailor made” for the CRA Board in light of his experience with infill housing. If he was not appointed to the Board of Adjustment, Commissioner Smith hoped he would be interested in the CRA Board.

Commissioner Katz wondered how Mr. Hernandez would react to a decision that could benefit a homeowner and set a precedent for the City. Mr. Hernandez said he never took precedent setting lightly. He felt many requests for variances were due to poor design work, and he believed there were many ways to resolve these types of issues. Mr. Hernandez understood everyone wanted to make the highest and best use of their properties, but it was essential to take the neighborhood and community into consideration. He did not feel variances should be granted unless a public purpose was being served without adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

Action: Additional action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

I-C – Water Skiing Zone – Middle River

A discussion was scheduled about the water skiing zone in the Middle River, as requested by Commissioner Katz. She explained she had raised the issue because the matter had been considered before she had become a Commissioner. Commissioner Katz understood the Marine Advisory Board had provided some recommendations in this regard in 1997 due to problems throughout the City with water skiing. In the fall of 1997, the Commission had taken a different direction, and the result was affecting a portion of her district.

Commissioner Katz explained that most of the areas in the City had been closed to water skiing, leaving only the Middle River open for the activity. She believed a one-year trial period had been suggested at the time, but the issue had not been reconsidered yet. Commissioner Katz wanted the Commission to hear the concerns of area residents and consider alternatives.

Mr. Jessie Gaddis, 2430 Sunrise Key Boulevard, said he lived along the most active area of the Middle River in terms of skiing and jet skiing. He believed the Commission had heard all about this issue in the past, and he did not think it was fair to “dump” this all in one place. Mr. Gaddis pointed out that there were other nice places to water ski, but only the Middle River was open to the activity. He stated that all of the sightseeing vessels went through this area, and the Marine Patrol tried to do a good job, but they could not be everywhere at once, and there would be an accident.

Mayor Naugle asked staff to display a map of the subject area. He believed there was some confusion with the exhibits. Mr. Gaddis pointed out a “blind turn” and described the traffic and activities. He also pointed out several other areas where people used to be allowed to ski, but they had been eliminated, so all the activity was concentrated in this single location. Mayor Naugle believed there were actually two areas for skiing.

Commissioner Smith recalled that the Commission had requested enforcement in terms of “go fast” boats that often sped through the area. He asked if there had been any success in that respect. Mr. Gaddis stated that he saw Marine Patrol boats in the area, but the vessels had good communications and knew when the police were in the neighborhood, so they slowed down.

Mayor Naugle inquired about the area between Sunrise Intracoastal and Sunrise Key. He believed that area was open for higher speeds. Mr. Jamie Hart, Supervisor of Marine Facilities, described the restrictions applicable to the different areas on the waterway. He stated that the water skiing zone allowed vessels no larger than 21', powered by a single engine, capable of towing a water skier or similar devices such as inner tubes. Other vessels had to travel with minimum wake in that zone. Mr. Hart recalled that had been approved in 1997, and the idle speed zone from 8th Street to the north side of the lagoon had been approved in 1994.

Mr. Joe Slama wanted equal treatment. He felt that if this activity was good for the Middle River, it should be good for all the waterways. Mr. Slama stated that when this skiing zone was established, Bill's Boat Rentals had obtained a temporary injunction, and more than half the tickets issued were being thrown out because discriminating against a certain type of boat was considered unconstitutional. He felt that if these activities were safe, then they should be allowed elsewhere in the City such as Rio Barcelona and Lake Sylvan, and everyone should be treated the same way. Mr. Slama imagined there had been good reasons why all the other areas had been closed and, if the activity was not safe, it should not be allowed on the Middle River either.

At 2:44 P.M., Commissioner Moore left the meeting. He returned at 2:45 P.M.

Mr. Slama understood the skiing zone had been established on a trial basis, and the experiment was not working. He stated that there were vessels going at high speeds through the area, and the Marine Patrol could not spend all its time on the Middle River when there were 100 miles of waterways in Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Slama understood the Marine Patrol had performed a study of the area, but the ramp at George English Park had been closed at the time. Therefore, the traffic on the Middle River had been significantly reduced during that period.

Mr. Slama said the combination of large vessels and personal watercraft made for a dangerous mix, and he believed there would be a tragic accident like the one that had occurred on the Intracoastal Waterway a few years ago. Mayor Naugle believed that incident had been classified as a homicide rather than an accident. Mr. Slama agreed that was correct. He noted that it had taken over 2 years to go through the Marine Advisory Board process, and he was concerned about another lengthy process. He hoped the Commission would address the issue as soon as possible.

Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Slama if the water skiing activities would be acceptable if there was better enforcement. Mr. Slama thought it was a possibility, but he could not envision a practical method of dealing with the situation. He believed it would take 3 boats, and he did not think the taxpayers who did not live on this stretch of the water would support spending that much money.

Mayor Naugle asked how many incidents there had been in the past 6 months. The Police Chief did not have those statistics with him, but this area was not the area in the City with the highest number of accidents or incidents from a statistical standpoint. He reported that the New River continued to have the highest volume of tickets and incidents.

Mr. Alan Gabriel said he lived on the Middle River and, whatever the Commission decided, he hoped they would maintain the waterways for the enjoyment of its residents. He stated that he lived on a canal that allowed no wake, but skiers often utilized the canal. Mayor Naugle asked if they went up to Federal Highway and turned around. Mr. Gabriel guessed so, and the canal was narrow and shallow, and extremely dangerous.

Mr. Gabriel thought the volume of boats was not being considered, with users coming down from Wilton Manors. Although George English Park was closed to trailers, there were still problems that impacted residents. As a boat owner and a waterfront property owner, he hoped the Commission would make sure people had other places to go so they did not all congregate in one small area.

Mr. Kevin Merrigan, 1341 Middle River Drive, said he belonged to the Marine Industries Association and the Florida Yacht Brokers Association, and he made his living on the water. He also enjoyed water skiing, and the water skiing zone had been set up as a compromise with the caveat that only boats of 21' or smaller would be allowed, and heavy enforcement would be provided. Mr. Merrigan stated that enforcement efforts had not worked, and the situation was more dangerous now than it had ever been before. He pointed out that the waterways were more and more crowded, and it was not fair to designate a single area for all this traffic. Mr. Merrigan pointed out that there were other and better areas for water skiing that were not being utilized. He felt the other areas should be opened up or, in the alternative; the Middle River should be designated as an idle speed zone like the other areas. Mr. Merrigan suggested that George English Park be designated as a safe water sports area, and he believed many people would contribute to such an effort.

Ms. Alice Smith said she lived on the lower part of the Middle River across from the Rio Barcelona Canal. She did not oppose water skiing, but the situation was extremely dangerous due to the congestion and unsafe operations. Further, people could not get on and off their docked boats in the area. Ms. Smith felt there were too many incompatible uses.

Ms. Heather Keith, Chair of the Marine Advisory Board, stated that 3 issues kept coming up before the Board – liveaboard boats and water quality, the rental of docks in residential areas, and skiing on the Middle River. She said that the Board had struggled with this issue and tried very hard to take input from the entire community, often into the early morning hours. Ms. Keith pointed out that there would always be problems with people who broke the law everywhere, but the latest reports from the Police Department indicated that this area was not a problem. In fact, from a statistical standpoint, the problems on the Middle River were far fewer than problems in other areas of the City.

Ms. Keith advised that Ms. Christine Teel, Board member, had pointed out that George English Park had been closed during the police detail devoted to this issue, and it was still closed. Nevertheless, at this time, there were not accidents being reported in the area, and there had not been a high volume of tickets issued. Ms. Keith could not recall a single accident on the Middle River involving a ski boat in the past 2 years.

Ms. Keith said that if the Commission intended to send this issue back to the Board, she would ask for specific direction because it had gone around and around on this matter. She would also need direction from the City Attorney's Office because she was not familiar with the status of the court injunction related to the rental jet ski operation in the area. Ms. Keith was hesitant about the Board reopening this issue, although she believed there were members who would question the idea of any action being taken without Board input.

Mayor Naugle pointed out that even if the Commission wanted to make changes to the current water ski zone, evening hearings would be necessary. He had been surprised to see this item on the agenda because he had not received a single call in this regard over the past year. Commissioner Katz said she had been receiving calls and letters over the past year. She recalled that the Marine Advisory Board had provided certain recommendations on this issue, but the City Commission had not followed its advice at all. She wondered if there was any reason to send the matter back to the Board if the Commission was not going to heed its advice.

Mayor Naugle pointed out that the Board had been created so the Commission could consult with it on marine related issues. Commissioner Smith thought it appeared there were various problems, and he wondered about the primary complaint. Commissioner Katz felt it was a combination of the safety issue, speed, and congestion, and she thought it was an "accident waiting to happen." She did not want to wait until someone was killed or maimed before taking some action to address the situation. Commissioner Katz did not feel it was fair for a single area to bear the entire brunt of the problem. Mayor Naugle did not feel the area north and south of Sunrise Boulevard could be described as one little area.

Commissioner Hutchinson thought it sounded as if the water skiing zone had been an experiment, and it was a question now of going back and readdressing the situation. She was grateful that there had not been an incident yet, but she agreed there was a problem with concentrating all this activity into one location. Commissioner Hutchinson agreed that was not fair and, when people in the area purchased their homes, there had been other areas for these water sports. She also agreed that the Board would need specific direction if the issue was sent back for further consideration so there would not be a "free for all."

Commissioner Moore had felt establishing this water sports zone had been a mistake at the time because it had basically created a "red light district" for skiers in one area. He did not feel that was fair. It had been his opinion at the time that the other two water skiing areas were much safer for the activity than the Middle River. Mayor Naugle understood he was referring to Rio Barcelona and Lake Sylvan. Commissioner Smith recalled that there was a time when people could ski on the New River as well.

Commissioner Moore pointed out that Fort Lauderdale was known as the "Venice of America" and the "Yachting Capital of the World," but these recreational uses were not being allowed on the City's waterways. He felt that was wrong. He did not, however, want to send this issue back to the Marine Advisory Board. Commissioner Moore believed the Board had done an excellent job of compiling the facts and suggesting alternatives, and he thought it likely the Board would only bring back the same recommendations. He hoped that if the Commission wanted to revisit this issue, it would do so from the direction of reopening the waterways for recreational purposes.

Commissioner Smith agreed with Commissioner Moore and thought there were other areas that should be considered for water sports besides the 3 mentioned today. He believed the C-14 canal would be an appropriate area, along with Mayan Lake, and Mills Pond Park. He noted that only ski club members could use Mills Pond Park. Commissioner Smith believed that residents on Lake Sylvan and the Rio Barcelona would fight to the bitter end to keep those areas closed to water sports.

Mayor Naugle stated that the Commission had not completely ignored the advice of the Marine Advisory Board. He pointed out that the Board had indicated that there was a need for a water sports area, and one had been established. Commissioner Moore agreed that was true, but he felt there should be a "level playing field." Mayor Naugle asked Mr. Slama if he felt the other areas should be opened for skiing. Mr. Slama said he just wanted equal treatment for everyone.

Commissioner Moore preferred to have a public hearing on the issue rather than referring the matter back to the Marine Advisory Board. Commissioner Katz agreed the materials generated from the discussions in 1997 were very clear and could be used instead. Mayor Naugle wondered how the Board would feel about it. Ms. Keith said she would not object, although she could not speak for the other Board members. Commissioner Smith preferred an update from the Board. It was the consensus of the Commission, however, to move forward with public hearings without asking the Board to readdress the issue.

Mayor Naugle understood the matter to be considered at a public hearing was the continuation of the Middle River water sports zone. Commissioner Smith also wanted to consider the opening of other areas to water sports. He pointed out that there was a big difference between slow speed and idle speed, and it was much easier to enforce idle speed limits. The Police Chief stated that enforcement involved placing resources where they would achieve stated objectives while doing what the community wanted at the same time. He said the Police Department had tried to balance these interests, but if other areas were opened up, there would be a need for greater police attention in those areas as well. Therefore, he hoped enforcement resources would be considered during the public hearing process.

Commissioner Moore noted that there were fees for the use of tennis courts, for example, and he thought consideration should be given to similar fees for water skiers to offset the cost of additional resources. Commissioner Smith thought that might be workable with a discount for City residents.

Mayor Naugle recommended that the public hearing be limited to continuing the Middle River water sports area rather than getting people "riled up" all over the City. He did not think anyone was really serious about opening other areas. Commissioner Hutchinson disagreed. She did not think it was fair for one area to bear the brunt. Commissioner Katz suggested that the subject of the public hearing be "water skiing in the City." It was Mayor Naugle's understanding that the City could regulate any waterway except the Intracoastal Waterway. The City Attorney agreed that was correct.

Commissioner Smith wondered if there could be a 60-day trial period of idle speed on the Middle River with a full-time enforcement commitment prior to a public hearing. Mayor Naugle understood he meant full-time enforcement of idle speeds unless a boat was towing a skier. Commissioner Smith agreed that was his intention. The Police Chief said he could not, in good conscience, state that the Marine Patrol could cover the Middle River 7 days a week for 16 or 18 hours a day. He stated that would basically call for removing the Marine Patrol from every other area of the City, but he would make every effort to deal with the issue within operational demands.

Commissioner Smith wondered if a water division of Citizens on Patrol could be created. The Police Chief said the Police Department had been exploring that idea. He pointed out that one policy issue that had to be decided was whether or not water skiing was desirable at all. Commissioner Katz thought it was desirable if it was feasible. Mayor Naugle noted that one could water ski in the ocean.

Mayor Naugle believed Commissioner Smith had suggested creation of an ordinance requiring idle speed in the various areas unless a vessel was towing a skier. He asked if the Commission wanted to have two public hearings on such an ordinance. Commissioner Moore felt the subject of the public hearing should be water skiing in general. The City Attorney understood the intent was an open-ended discussion was proposed on the entire subject of where water skiing should and should not be allowed. If an ordinance came out of that discussion, there would ultimately be three public hearings. Mayor Naugle believed a discussion of Commissioner Smith's suggestion would require two public hearings. The City Attorney agreed an ordinance could be drafted for a first reading public hearing. Commissioner Moore preferred to hear the entire issue and make a decision even if it took three hearings.

Ms. Keith asked that whatever hearings the Commission decided to hold, they be scheduled for after the Marine Advisory Board's January meeting. That would allow her to inform the Board so members could attend the hearings, and the public that watched the Board's meetings would also receive notification. Mayor Naugle thought a hearing at the Commission's second meeting in January would be appropriate. The City Attorney understood it was the consensus of the Commission to have a public hearing on the entire issue of water skiing in order to consider what kind of ordinance should be drafted for subsequent public hearings.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked if the Middle River water sports zone had originally been approved as a test case. Commissioner Smith did not believe so. The City Attorney had to say it had not been an experiment only since an ordinance had been adopted to enact it. However, the discussion might have made it understood that if it did not work out, it would be reconsidered.

Action: Public hearings to be scheduled as discussed.

At 3:31 P.M., Commissioner Moore left the meeting. He returned at 3:33 P.M.

I-D – Road Closures

A discussion was scheduled on a proposal from Commissioner Smith for converting road closures from temporary to permanent. The City Manager noted that a written report had been provided, but Mr. Partington could also provide a summary. Mr. Partington described the history of the issue and advised there were about 32 temporary closures in the City in several neighborhoods. For the most part, the closures were accessible to emergency vehicles. The question now was whether and how to make them permanent. He noted that some neighborhoods had endeavored to obtain turnarounds, but that necessitated about 60' of right-of-way.

Mr. Partington advised that one alternative was a T-type of turnaround, and another was a "hammerhead" turnaround. He displayed photographs of these types of turnarounds and said that was the standard staff had sought in terms of making road closures permanent. Mr. Partington explained that staff favored it because without a turnaround, it was sometimes necessary for large vehicles to back out, and that posed a certain risk. Therefore, staff preferred to seek these turnaround areas, but the rights-of-way in many areas were only 40' or 50' instead of 60'. In the past, staff had sought to obtain the necessary right-of-way through negotiation, but it was a time consuming and difficult process.

Mr. Partington said that if the Commission wanted to make closures permanent in areas without sufficient right-of-way for turnaround areas, staff would recommend signage at the major road indicating there was no turnaround, and that the closures continue to be accessible to emergency vehicles. He stated that there had not been good experiences with the flexible stakes used at present, but staff had found a better type of stake and included a suggested design in the back-up material. Mr. Partington believed only two of these types of stakes would be necessary to block a width of approximately 9'.

Mr. Partington stated that the conceptual design also involved a 10' landscaped area, but it might be difficult to obtain that space in some neighborhoods. Therefore, he could not say that this type of closure would be possible everywhere. He recommended that the Commission continue its existing policy for making temporary road closures permanent and seeking turnaround area whenever possible. If the Commission preferred to move more quickly, staff recommended that permanent closures be accessible to emergency vehicles similar to the conceptual design distributed.

Mr. Partington noted that some neighborhoods had numerous closures, and he thought the Commission might want to consider one hearing for a neighborhood on the principal of permanent closure. Neighborhoods could then identify funding for permanent closures on a road-by-road basis. He estimated the cost of closures at \$12,000, including landscaping and irrigation.

Commissioner Moore asked why the closures had to be accessible for emergency vehicles. He pointed out that new neighborhoods were being developed throughout the community with one way in and one way out and walls around the entire neighborhood. He was sure emergency vehicles had been considered in that type of neighborhood design, so he did not understand why it would not work the same way in Fort Lauderdale. Mayor Naugle agreed. He had understood the garbage trucks rather than emergency vehicles needed the flexible stakes.

Mr. Partington stated that the initial thinking had been that the closures should be accessible for emergency vehicles because there were so many closures in some neighborhoods, like Lake Ridge. That caused concerns about delays in response times, and concerns had been raised about accommodating police pursuits. He noted that this type of design also offered large vehicles the choice of going through rather than performing an unsafe backing up maneuver.

Commissioner Moore thought that if walled communities could be designed with limited access points, the same concept would work in Fort Lauderdale. Commissioner Smith agreed. In fact, he was disappointed in staff's recommendation because they had not considered whether the closures were a good thing overall. He pointed out that there were numerous streets in the City that terminated in dead ends.

Mayor Naugle noted that the back-up memorandum indicated that vehicles like garbage trucks were of gravest concern. Commissioner Smith displayed pictures of several dead-end streets and pointed out that garbage was collected on those streets somehow.

Commissioner Smith referred to the style of the closures. He displayed a photograph of a closure in Victoria Park done by a corporate citizen, and he felt this could be an alternate design that would allow a garbage truck to pass through by hopping the curb. Commissioner Smith noted that there was a gated closure in Flagler Heights that could also be used. He understood the corporate closure had been done for \$3,500, so it appeared City staff was taking a "Cadillac" approach.

Commissioner Moore believed staff had followed Commission guidance and felt there was a need for emergency vehicle access. He thought the Commission should give clear direction that was not a concern and preferred closures as if these were walled communities. Commissioner Hutchinson wanted to maintain pedestrian and bike access. Commissioner Moore agreed. He understood what staff had suggested, but he preferred a different approach at lesser cost.

Mayor Naugle noted that when the garbage contract came up for renewal, trucks with more than a single crew person might be possible in certain neighborhoods if backing trucks was a concern. Mr. Greg Kisela, Assistant City Manager, explained that there were some locations in which garbage trucks had to back out onto Sunrise Boulevard, for example. He noted that even if there was a second crew member to serve as a spotter, this was a policy decision for the Commission.

Commissioner Smith suggested that the Commission appropriate some funding and give neighborhoods 90 days to present designs, street by street, that could accommodate garbage trucks one way or another. He thought the neighborhoods could propose plans designed to deal with the different conditions in each location, and he understood there were even some corporate sponsors. Commissioner Moore hoped the corporate sponsors were not seeking advertising on the curb or anything like that.

Commissioner Smith suggested that up to \$4,000 per closure be appropriated, for 24 closures, from the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget. Commissioner Moore did not object, although he felt up to \$3,500 per closure would be sufficient to provide an attractive design. He also thought xeriscaping should be mandatory because irrigation and maintenance was so costly otherwise. Commissioner Smith supported the idea. Mayor Naugle believed they could also be designed to take advantage of natural runoff.

Commissioner Katz asked how much funding was available for this purpose. Mr. Kisela believed \$100,000 to \$110,000 had been budgeted Citywide. He noted that this money was also intended to fund speed humps and other traffic modifications throughout the community. Mayor Naugle asked how much had been left over from last year, and Mr. Kisela estimated about \$25,000. Commissioner Moore believed there was about \$300,000 available in the budget since the Commission had decided not to do any more promotional and cultural contributing. He was sure the City management would be able to find the money to set a certain aesthetic standard. The City Manager noted that the \$300,000 was prospective and was not available this year.

The City Manager recalled that most of the closures had originally been implemented for the purpose of crime prevention. He thought people had been using bikes or escaping on foot, particularly in the Lake Ridge area. The City Manager wanted to make sure everyone was aware from a crime prevention standpoint that the closure design would continue to allow pedestrian and bike traffic. He noted that there might be some other measures that would address that problem. Commissioner Katz wondered if there was any money available from the Law Enforcement Trust Fund (LETF) since these were intended to address crime prevention issues.

It was the consensus of the Commission to seek plans from the neighborhoods within 90 days, on a street-by-street basis, for the proposed road closures. It was also agreed that up to \$3,500 per closure should be budgeted and that xeriscaping be a mandatory aspect of the plans. Commissioner Hutchinson also wanted to know how much money the neighborhoods had for the closures from other sources. Mayor Naugle noted that the City Manager could provide a recommendation about funding. Commissioner Katz wanted to leave some of the money available for speed humps and other traffic calming methods.

Mr. Harold Berlin, of Sun Garden Apartments, pointed out that access was necessary for certain utility personnel, and there was a standard lock that was used so these personnel could use the same keys for access. He suggested that a similar practice be used for the closures with gates to which utility and emergency personnel had keys. Mr. Berlin pointed out that this process worked very well in the entire City.

Commissioner Moore wondered if the GIS system could show emergency vehicles where the closures were located so drivers could choose alternate routes. Mayor Naugle believed the technology was available if installing gates was the issue. He agreed there might be locations where gates were appropriate and, in those cases, use of common locks would be a great idea for utility personnel. Commissioner Smith noted that gates might be included in the designs presented by the neighborhoods.

Mr. Larry Harvey, of the Lake Ridge neighborhood, said there had been a continuing cost for replacement of the flexible stakes. He suggested the closures be made permanent right now with some 8' x 8's with wood across them and reflector tape to eliminate those costs. In the meantime, neighborhoods could develop their plans and seek corporate sponsors.

Mr. Jay Herrig, President of the South Middle River Civic Association, described the boundaries of the neighborhood and said he had met with the area's new community policing officer. He had learned that the closures had done their jobs of reducing the incidents of crime, and he provided statistical information in that respect. Mr. Herrig pointed out that the neighborhood was large geographically, but it was financially very small, so it would be a real hardship to come up with dollars. However, the neighborhood was willing to pledge sweat equity. He appreciated the idea of allowing neighborhoods 90 days to develop game plans.

Ms. Peggy Keller, of Middle River Terrace, supported the suggestion to develop ideas over the next 90 days, and the Middle River Terrace had a particular corporate sponsor that had helped with the one very nice closure. She stated that property values were increasing because people were taking care of their properties, and she wanted the closures to look as well.

Action: Approved as discussed. Neighborhoods to submit plans in 90 days.

I-E – proposal for Identification of Neighborhood/Homeowner Associations

A discussion was scheduled on a proposal to develop a policy for the identification of neighborhood/homeowner associations, as requested by Commissioner Hutchinson. She said she was shocked that there was no back-up material associated with this item, but it appeared there were no existing standards. Commissioner Hutchinson stated that there were some neighborhoods with two associations. She understood there were certain standards associated with Neighborhood Capital Improvement Program (NCIP) grants, but she was not sure how the City recognized associations. Commissioner Hutchinson also wondered how the City could tell if groups were actually representative of neighborhoods, particularly if there were no regular means of communication.

Mayor Naugle suggested that the Council of Civic Associations be asked to develop some standards and provide a recommendation in this respect. Commissioner Moore thought that was a good idea. Commissioner Hutchinson liked the idea, too, but that could prove difficult. Commissioner Moore suggested that each Commissioner urged the civic associations to become involved in the Council of Civic Associations and, after 90 days when involvement had increased, a recommendation could be sought.

Mayor Naugle believed the district meetings instituted by the Commissioners had actually diluted the Council of Civic Associations a little because there were so many different meetings. He thought the Council might want to consider meeting on a quarterly basis since the district meetings provided opportunities for input on a more regular basis. Commissioner Moore felt the City should try to build the Council up again because everyone had become so parochial, and the Council had been beneficial in that respect.

Commissioner Hutchinson said that when she had joined the Council years ago, it had been a group that had taught her how to deal with the neighborhood association process. She stated that it had not been a political process, but an educational process. Commissioner Moore felt the City had become very “departmentalized,” and the Neighborhood Council might have some suggestions. Commissioner Hutchinson agreed there might be some information available about how other cities handled these issues.

Mr. Pete Witschen, Assistant City Manager, explained that there had been no back-up material by design because staff desired consensus from the Commission as to whether or not it wanted to study this issue. He advised that the matter had been discussed in the past, and the Council had some standards, but there were as many down sides as up sides. Mr. Witschen said that staff would have to work on it to bring the proper documentation to the Commission if that research was desired. He had not wanted the Commission to think that staff was endorsing any particular position in this regard.

Commissioner Moore said there had been a civic association in his district, which a number of people had felt was not representative of the neighborhood residents. Therefore, they had tried to become involved in the civic association electoral process, and there had been meetings where everyone was afraid to say anything or do anything. Commissioner Hutchinson agreed no one had been able to make a motion, and Commissioner Smith thought the situation had even deteriorated into fistfights. Commissioner Moore said that as a result, those who had felt unable to participate had formed their own association with the same boundaries as the first.

Commissioner Hutchinson advised that there was one neighborhood in her districts with two associations, but she believed the second had been formed because some of the residents had not cared for a proposed assessment project. However, the members of the second group were also members of the first association.

Mayor Naugle stated that membership could not be limited due to Constitutional protections, but the City could have a criteria to recognize associations if they wished to apply for funding or be parties to agreements with the City. Commissioner Hutchinson believed boundaries could be established and a board of directors elected with payment of a fee to the State in order to be recognized as a neighborhood association by the State. Mayor Naugle did not think the City should require incorporation with the State, although that was one way to handle it. He believed the City could establish its own criteria such as requiring by-laws, a certain number of meetings per year, open elections, etc. Commissioner Hutchinson agreed.

Commissioner Katz did not want to impose criteria that would preclude a group from forming its own association if they felt they were not being adequately represented. Commissioner Moore believed that if there was an open and appropriate election process, a disgruntled group of members could vote in new board members. Commissioner Smith thought that could be difficult when, for example, the alienated association members were only 10% of the whole neighborhood.

Mayor Naugle did not think the City could do anything to control situations like that, and it might be best to have a separate group in such cases. Commissioner Smith thought the problem arose when the two overlapped. Mayor Naugle thought it was up to the district Commissioner to make further inquiries when someone claimed to represent a certain group, and things like that could be taken into consideration during the decision-making process. However, standards could be imposed when groups were seeking funding.

Commissioner Hutchinson said that there were sometimes association meetings held that were advertised only by a sign on a light pole. At times, there were more City staff members present than there were association members, and she was concerned that staff was spending time making presentations to groups that represented very few.

Commissioner Smith liked the idea of somehow making the Council of Civic Associations an important aspect of the process. Commissioner Moore agreed. Mayor Naugle believed the district meetings had affected the Council. He suggested that staff research how other organizations handled the situation and provide a recommendation. Commissioner Moore suggested that the Commissioners urge their civic associations to join the Council in the meantime, perhaps over the next 90 days. It was agreed.

Action: Subject to be considered again in 90 days.

I-F – Parking of Boats in Residential Areas

A discussion was scheduled on the parking of boats on multi-family residential properties. Notice of the public discussion was published on December 9, 2000. Mr. Dan Siff, Community and Comprehensive Planning, explained that a problem had arisen in the Poinciana Park neighborhood concerning the parking of a boat in a front yard. Problems associated with that included noise, emission of fumes, and general aesthetics. In studying the issue, staff felt there were three possible solutions. He advised that the first was for the Commission to direct staff to commence a Citywide study to determine the effect of prohibiting boats in front yards in residential zoning districts. Mr. Siff recalled that a similar study had been conducted in the RS4.4 and RS8 neighborhoods in 1998, and the RS8 neighborhoods felt the proposed prohibition would be too onerous.

Mr. Siff stated that a second option would be to direct staff to prepare an ordinance prohibiting boats in front yards in residential districts unless they were in an enclosed garage or carport. He noted this fact would provide the most immediate solution, but there would likely be ongoing consequences. The final option was to direct staff to do a specific study of the Poinciana Park neighborhood.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked if the prohibition would pertain only to front yards or if side yards would be affected as well. Mr. Siff replied that both the front and sides could be affected. Mayor Naugle understood from Code Enforcement Board and Special Master meeting minutes that people were cited all over the City for parking vehicles in landscaped areas. He believed the same regulations could be used if boats were being parked in landscaped areas now. Mr. Pete Witschen, Assistant City Manager, clarified that it was illegal when the landscaping was killed as a result because the landscaping itself was required.

Commissioner Smith knew of one property that had a boat parked in the front, hard-surfaced yard that was screened by a fence so it was not visible. Mayor Naugle suggested a prohibition on parking vehicles or boats on landscaped areas. Commissioner Hutchinson agreed, regardless of whether the grass was dead or not.

Commissioner Moore pointed out that there were a number of individuals who parked boats in their side yards and might not be visible. Mr. Siff believed there were problems because people ran the boats where they were parked, generating noise and fumes.

Commissioner Katz said that there was a big problem in her district with people who had huge boats in their driveways. They were not parked on landscaped areas, but it was ugly. While she acknowledged that might be workable in the RS4.4 areas where the boats were screened by bushes, etc., but she was receiving complaints from the RS-8 neighborhoods. Commissioner Smith pointed out that the 1998 study had shown that most RS-8 residents felt a prohibition would be too onerous.

Mayor Naugle thought one problem with the RS-8 zoning was that there were a lot of 5' side yards where boats could not fit. However, the RS4.4 had 10' side yards. Commissioner Smith felt parking on lawns was unsightly. Commissioner Moore agreed. Mayor Naugle suggested an ordinance amendment prohibiting parking on the lawn except for temporary parking lots used, for example, by churches during services. Commissioner Smith wondered how that would affect swale parking. He was concerned about the unintended consequences of such an ordinance when staff started citing people for parking on grassy swales.

Mr. Chris Wren, Construction and Development Services, understood the Commission wanted staff to draft a Code amendment prohibiting parking on landscaped private property. He noted that swales were public property. He pointed out that parking areas were required to be paved in most zoning, although gravel was permitted in the RS4.4 or RS-8 zoning districts. Mr. Wren advised that such a Code amendment would have to be presented to the Planning & Zoning Board before presentation to the Commission for action.

Commissioner Moore wondered what would happen if people decided to pave their front yards in order to park their boats. Mayor Naugle thought that was a possibility if someone could pave their front yards and still meet landscaping requirements. Commissioner Hutchinson wondered why they could not be cited now if parking areas had to be impervious. Mr. Wren advised that staff believed this use was consistent with current regulations as long as the landscaping was not dead. He noted that an amended ordinance could include an amortization period so that existing situations would not have to conform until a certain period of time had passed. Mr. Witschen added that if there had been a way under existing regulations to address the situation, staff would have issued citations.

Commissioner Katz wondered if an overlay district could be established in RS-8 because some areas wanted these types of regulations while others did not. The City Attorney thought the Community Area Planning (CAP) process could be utilized to demonstrate the differences between one neighborhood and another for zoning purposes. He believed, however, that the Poinciana Park neighborhood would not be addressed through that process for some 5 years.

Mayor Naugle pointed out that a valid distinction could be made between areas with 7.5' side yards and 10' side yards. Mr. Wren thought that was a good point staff could investigate further as a strategy.

Mayor Naugle did not feel any amortization period was necessary insofar as parking on landscaping on private property. He felt that should be effective upon second reading of an ordinance. Mayor Naugle felt an ordinance of that nature would be a good first step, and the CAP process could be considered further in the future. Commissioner Smith asked if only prohibiting parking on private landscaping would result in boats being parked on swales. Mr. Wren advised that boats could not be parked on swales now.

Action: Ordinance to be drafted as discussed.

II-A – Investment Results for Fiscal year Ended September 30, 2000 (1999/2000)

A report was distributed on the City's investment earnings and activities during fiscal year 1999/2000. Commissioner Moore thought the City should be a little more aggressive in this respect.

Action: None. Status report.

III-B – Advisory Board Vacancies

1. Board of Adjustment

It was the consensus of the Commission to appoint Mr. Michael Ferber to the alternate position on the Board of Adjustment.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

2. Budget Advisory Board

Action: Deferred.

3. Citizens Review Board

Action: Deferred.

4. Civil Service Board

Action: Deferred.

5. Community Appearance Board

Action: Deferred.

6. Community Services Board

Action: Deferred.

7. Downtown Development Authority

It was the consensus of the Commission to schedule interviews for the Downtown Development Authority on January 3, 2001. Commissioner Katz wished to interview Debbie Orshefsky, Jack Loos, and Gale Butler. Commissioner Hutchinson wanted to interview Quinn Goodchild, and Commissioner Smith wished to interview Charlie Ladd. Commissioner Moore supported all the names submitted.

Action: Interviews to be scheduled for January 3, 2001.

8. Economic Development Advisory Board

Commissioner Hutchinson wanted to appoint Ms. Eason Dobbs to the Economic Development Advisory Board

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

9. Unsafe Structures and Housing Appeals Board

Commissioner Katz suggested the appointment of Mr. David Szetlick to this Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

10. Northwest/Progresso/Flagler Heights
CRA Advisory Board

Commissioner Smith suggested the appointment of Mr. Tim Hernandez to this Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

IV – City Commission Reports

1. Cable Television – Golden Heights

Commissioner Moore reported that there were residents in Golden Heights who could not receive government access Channel 38 on television. He thought the area might still be operated under the County's contract for cable services. The City Clerk agreed to check on it.

Action: Staff to investigate.

2. Holiday Decorations

Commissioner Moore pointed out that the major thoroughfares in many Broward County cities were well lit and decorated for the holidays. Plantation, for example, looked beautiful, and he recalled that Commissioner Hutchinson had mentioned this subject before. Commissioner Moore did not know why Fort Lauderdale could not do the same, at least on the major roadways. He recalled some money spent for decorations, but he did not know what had happened.

The City Manager said that when he had first come to Fort Lauderdale, there had been a cooperative venture between the City and businesses, and Jim Hill had been the liaison. However, over a period of years, decorations had only been provided sporadically. The City Manager believed the decorations that had been purchased had left much to be desired. Commissioner Moore did not know why monies could not be budgeted for this purpose. Mayor Naugle asked staff to investigate how much other communities spent on decorations.

Action: Staff to investigate.

3. Drugs and Prostitution in Northwest Quadrant

Commissioner Moore said he had been on the City Commission for 12 years, and there were still drug and prostitution problems in the northwest part of the City. He felt a special task force was necessary to deal with these issues, similar to the methods used to address gang problems on the beach. Commissioner Moore thought a goal of at least 100 drug arrests in 30 days would have an impact on the problem in the high drug traffic areas. Commissioner Smith felt there should be a zero tolerance policy on the part of the whole Commission. Mayor Naugle thought it would help if the community would get out and take back their streets.

Commissioner Moore preferred to set a measurable goal so the community would see a demonstration of the City's commitment. Mayor Naugle thought 100 arrests a week would be more appropriate. Commissioner Smith did not think a number should be assigned. Rather, he felt a game plan was necessary. Commissioner Moore said he was suggesting a number because he wanted some public relations aspect to demonstrate a commitment to zero tolerance on street drug sales, for example. He desired a concentrated effort on the problem.

Commissioner Moore knew of one family who could no longer stand the activities going on in front of their home, and there was a store at 24th Avenue and Sistrunk Boulevard where drug sales were going on all the time. Mayor Naugle felt there had been to be a willingness on the part of the community in addition to a concentrated police effort. He suggested that the police trailer be brought into the area.

The City Manager understood the Commission wanted results, although he did not think a quota be set other than to indicate the need for a reduction in the incidents of drugs, etc. He did not want the City to run afoul of allegations involving selective enforcement or targeting. The Police Chief agreed that any crime was too much crime, although Fort Lauderdale was the only community with a double-digit reduction in crime levels according to the FBI. Nevertheless, statistical information was little consolation. He advised that there were some "showmanship" efforts that could be made, and there were some solid measures that could be undertaken with the help of the community.

The Police Chief said there had been significant increases in enforcement, arrests and prosecutions, although he would continue to pursue the most productive means possible to provide an increased comfort level within the community. He stated that the best results usually came from long-term partnerships with the community, and he would see to it that those efforts continued.

Commissioner Moore thought the problem might be that there was not enough involvement on the part of the Public Information Office. In fact, on the day of the election, there had been a drug bust in front of Carter Park, but there had not been anything in the newspaper about it the next day. He suggested that staff from the Public Information Office should come to community and civic association meetings. The Police Chief noted that statements were issued about incidents of this nature, but they were apparently not considered as newsworthy as other stories. Commissioner Moore thought there had to be some method of keeping the community informed.

Mayor Naugle suggested COMSTAT exercises. The Police Chief stated that the Police Department had been doing that for over 2 years, and City Commissioners were welcome to attend. Mayor Naugle thought it would be a good idea to provide the Commission with a demonstration. He also requested statistical information about arrests over the past 6 months. The Police Chief stated that Commissioner Smith had recently mentioned the need for a public safety workshop after the holidays, and a video of a COMSTAT meeting could be provided at that time. In addition, there were some other initiatives of which the public might not be aware.

Mayor Naugle suggested an evening presentation, and that could be an opportunity to speak with the members of the Council of Civic Associations. The Police Chief noted that the Police/Fire motor home was slated for a February or March delivery. The City Manager suggested a month with 5 Tuesdays be selected. Mayor Naugle noted that April had 5 weeks.

Commissioner Smith felt everyone in the whole City needed to be made aware that conditions everywhere were getting safer, but a major initiative might be necessary in the area mentioned by Commissioner Moore even if it meant spending money. Commissioner Katz did not think spending more money was necessarily the answer. She believed that it was sometimes a matter of being more clever with existing resources. Commissioner Smith felt a commitment had to be made to end street level drug dealing in the northwest this year, whatever it took. Commissioner Moore agreed.

The Police Chief stated that the Police Department was the City's primary tool for addressing crime. However, to say an area was going to be cleared of drugs or prostitution did not provide a long-term solution. He explained that could be done, but it could return again unless a financial investment was made in terms of housing stock, etc., at the same time. Commissioner Moore pointed out that Fort Lauderdale was a "weed and seed" City, and it was important to seed as well as weed.

Action: Evening workshop to be scheduled for April. Additional action as discussed.

4. Project on Northwest 13th Street

Commissioner Moore wanted to take this opportunity to compliment the contractor performing the project on Northwest 13th Street. He asked that a similar project be undertaken for 19th Street as well. The City Manager agreed to investigate possible funding sources, including Community Development Block Grant funds.

Action: As discussed.

5. County Parks GOB Committee

Commissioner Hutchinson reported that applications for the County's Parks GOB Committee were being accepted until 5:00 P.M. today, and Kathy Connor and John Rude had submitted applications. She hoped there would be Fort Lauderdale members on this 13-member Committee. The City Manager reported that staff had attended the organizational meeting, and he had been in touch with Mr. Tom Tapp and Mr. Al Massey. He noted that Mr. Tapp might be going to do some work for the County to implement the bond projects.

Mr. Phil Thornburg, Acting Parks & Recreation Director, reported that all of the Parks, Recreation & Beaches Advisory Board members had been encouraged to apply for membership on this Committee and the TREC Committee.

Action: None.

6. Fire Department Master Key

Commissioner Hutchinson requested a report in January about a master key for use by the Fire Department in high rise buildings as she had mentioned in the past with respect to elevators.

Action: Staff to provide report in January.

7. Planning & Zoning Board

Commissioner Hutchinson was concerned that one of the individuals her predecessor had appointed to the Planning & Zoning Board did not recuse himself from certain cases as necessary. The City Attorney did not know the facts of the matter. Commissioner Hutchinson believed this individual was a shareholder in a company. Mayor Naugle did not think someone who had stock in a company with a thousand others necessarily had a conflict of interest. The City Attorney advised that the Statutes and the Attorney General's Opinions in this regard were very specific, and he would have to look into this particular situation.

Action: City Attorney to investigate.

8. Himmarshee Business Association

Commissioner Hutchinson believed the Himmarshee Business Association had recently closed a street for the City Link Music Fest. Like other events on Las Olas Boulevard, they had been permitted to sell alcoholic beverages in the street. She thought some standards should be set because when some of the area establishments are started selling alcohol on the street, the Police Department had stopped them, and she felt the same rules should apply to everyone.

The Police Chief said he had observed the same thing during Christmas on Las Olas, and there had been misunderstandings about what was allowed and what was not. Since that time, the various City departments involved had been invited to meet to ensure the events were held in compliance with ordinances and event permits in order to be fair to all.

Action: As discussed.

9. Crime Statistics

Commissioner Smith hoped the Police Department would continue the good work on reducing crime, as reflected by the statistical information provided by the FBI and mentioned earlier. He noted that Fort Lauderdale was the only City in Broward County where crime had been reduced by double digits.

Action: None.

10. Juvenile Intake Facility (JIF)

Commissioner Smith was glad to know the Police Chief was working with the Sheriff because since the policies had been changed in Tallahassee, there had been 70 juvenile felons -- 24 auto thieves, 24 burglars, 12 drug dealers, 6 armed robbers, 2 thieves, and 2 juveniles who had beaten people up. They had been arrested but just taken home to their parents, and Commissioner Smith was very concerned about this terribly flawed system that released violent offenders.

Mayor Naugle hoped Commissioner Smith would pass that information along to all of the Commissioners. The Police Chief agreed to send it along. Commissioner Smith reported that he had received a letter from Governor Bush about some money available from the Public Safety Review Panel that could perhaps be used to subsidize the JIF.

Action: As discussed.

11. Citizen Volunteer Corps (CVC)

Commissioner Smith reported that the recent CVC project and event at the beach had been well attended. He thanked Commissioner Hutchinson and Mayor Naugle for attending. He advised that it had been so well attended that the paint had run out in an hour and a half, and the event had ended early just as Commissioner Katz had arrived. Commissioner Smith presented a video report about the CVC event.

Action: None.

12. High Speed Rail

Mayor Naugle reported that the high speed rail issue was going to be on the ballot, and he understood a stop was scheduled for Fort Lauderdale if it was approved by the voters. He provided the City Manager with some information in this regard.

Action: None.

V – City Manager Reports

1. Item O-6 from December 12, 2000 Agenda

The City Manager stated that after conversations with staff and the parties involved, staff did not feel it would be a good idea to move forward with this item. He advised that a proposal had been submitted to expedite these types of issues and ensure community input.

Action: None.

At 5:15 P.M., the meeting was recessed for an executive closed door session regarding litigation strategy in connection with New River Associates, Ltd. v City of Fort Lauderdale (Case No. 00-5634[14]). It was reconvened at 5:57 P.M.

Meeting adjourned at 5:57 P.M.

NOTE: A MECHANICAL RECORDING HAS BEEN MADE OF THE FOREGOING PROCEEDINGS, OF WHICH THESE MINUTES ARE A PART, AND IS ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.